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1993/04/05

QIAN Qichen
(Phonetic: cheeyen)
(0629/0366/3819)

*Vice Premier (since March 1993);
Member, Politburo (since October 1992);
Minister of Foreign Affairs (since
1988); State Councilor (since 1991)*

Addressed as: Mr. Minister

Qian Qichen, a career diplomat, is the first foreign minister in a decade to serve concurrently as Vice Premier. He has traveled widely since the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in an effort to rebuild China's image in the international community. He has visited the United States several times, most recently during the January 1992 UN summit. Qian has also been instrumental in breaking Beijing's international isolation by traveling extensively throughout Africa, Europe, and Asia.

Qian was born on 5 January 1928. His early career closely paralleled those of many senior Chinese leaders. When the Japanese occupied Shanghai in 1937, all high schools were required to teach Japanese. Qian learned a few words of Japanese and then joined the anti-Japanese underground movement; he became a Chinese Communist Party (CCP) member in 1942. In the late 1940s he was a reporter for a Chinese newspaper; he served in the Communist Youth League before joining the Foreign Ministry in 1953. The following year Qian was sent to study in the Soviet Union and began building his considerable expertise in Soviet affairs. He subsequently served two tours at the Embassy in Moscow before being recalled to China in 1964. Qian was purged from the CCP at the onset of the Cultural Revolution in 1966 and did not reappear until 1972, when he was

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reassigned to Moscow as a counselor. Two years later he was appointed Ambassador to Guinea. During 1976-82 he served as director of the Information Department of the Foreign Ministry and as government spokesman to the diplomatic community and foreign press in Beijing. He became vice minister in charge of Soviet and East European affairs in 1982. Qian was elected to the CCP Central Committee in 1987.

Qian speaks fluent English, Russian, and French. Western press reports describe him as polished, confident, and always at ease. Those reports note that he is alert and expressive and has a quick sense of humor. During his trips to the Washington area, Qian has enjoyed popular music concerts at Wolf Trap Farm Park's Filene Center and musicals at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. He is married to Zhou Hanqiong and has two children.

5 April 1993